PHENOMENON 8: FOX

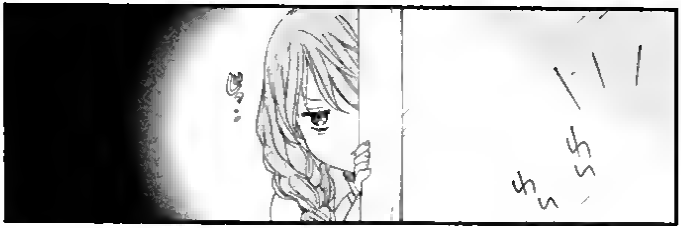
HEY, DO YOU WANT TO GO TO ERISUYA ON THE WAY HOME? THEY'VE STARTED SELLING RED BEAN SOUP
OH, THEY'VE ALREADY PUT OUT THE WINTER MENU
NIKKI-CHAAAN!
...AH! THE FIRST COMMITTEE MEETING IS TODAY
OH, I SEE THE SPORTS FESTIVAL COMMITTEE?
OH THEN HOW ABOUT TOMORROW?
IT'S CLOSED TOMORROW
OH, IT IS?
WELL... IT LOOKS LIKE I HAVE SOMEONE TO THANK FOR RECOMMENDING ME IN HOMEROOM THIS MORNING
YEAH. IF ONLY YOU HADN'T BEEN LATE, EH?
THAT'S LIFE FOR YOU...

NISHIKI.
FORGET I CALLED YOU SUMI, SUMI-CHAN!
OH YEAH, MISA! I SHOULDN'T HAVE CALLED YOU SUMI JUST NOW! I SWORE TO KEEP IT SECRET AT SCHOOL!!

Eeisu?
IDIOT!
IT'S MISA! MISAKI!!
OH! OF COURSE EBISUYA'S SUMI-CHAN WOULD KNOW!

YOU'RE LATE FOR THE MEETING.
AH! SOUMA!
YOU TOTALLY DID THAT ON PURPOSE!

HEY, DON'T FORGET YOUR BAG.
OH, RIGHT.
YUP! C'MON, LET'S GO!
GOT IT!? HEEEY!
YOU'RE ON THE COMMITTEE TOO?



KANO-SAN!
SO AM I!
SOUMA AND HANAOKA-SAN ARE ON THE COMMITTEE?
WELL LET'S BEGIN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THE FALL FIRE-FLY FESTIVAL
PLEASE PASS AROUND THE ITINERARY FROM BEFORE
WHOA! WHAT A COINCIDENCE!
THERE AREN'T THAT MANY GIRLS HERE SO I'M KINDA NERVOUS...CAN I SIT NEXT TO YOU?
OF COURSE
Kano sempai I'm here too
THANKS TO SAKI-CHAN'S INFO I GOT THE CHANCE TO SLIP INTO THE SAME COMMITTEE AS HER RIGHT AWAY...
Saki-chan
Eyes of an assassin
EVEN IF THIS IS A WASTE, I'LL DEFINITELY TAKE HER DOWN...

YOU'RE FOLDING THEM!?
HMM. AN ACTIVITY THAT EVERY GRADE CAN DO...
I AM!
WHAT IS THAT? ORIGAMI?
I KNOW THAT, BUT...
YEAH! I HAVE TO WRITE DOWN IMPORTANT STUFF SO I DON'T FORGET
.....
WHAT'S WITH HER?
LOOKS THIS IS GONNA BE HARDER THAN I THOUGHT...
HUH YOU TURNED THEM ALL INTO CRANES
HOW ADORABLE YOU'RE LIKE YOUR GRANDMA
WOW THANK YOU SHEILA

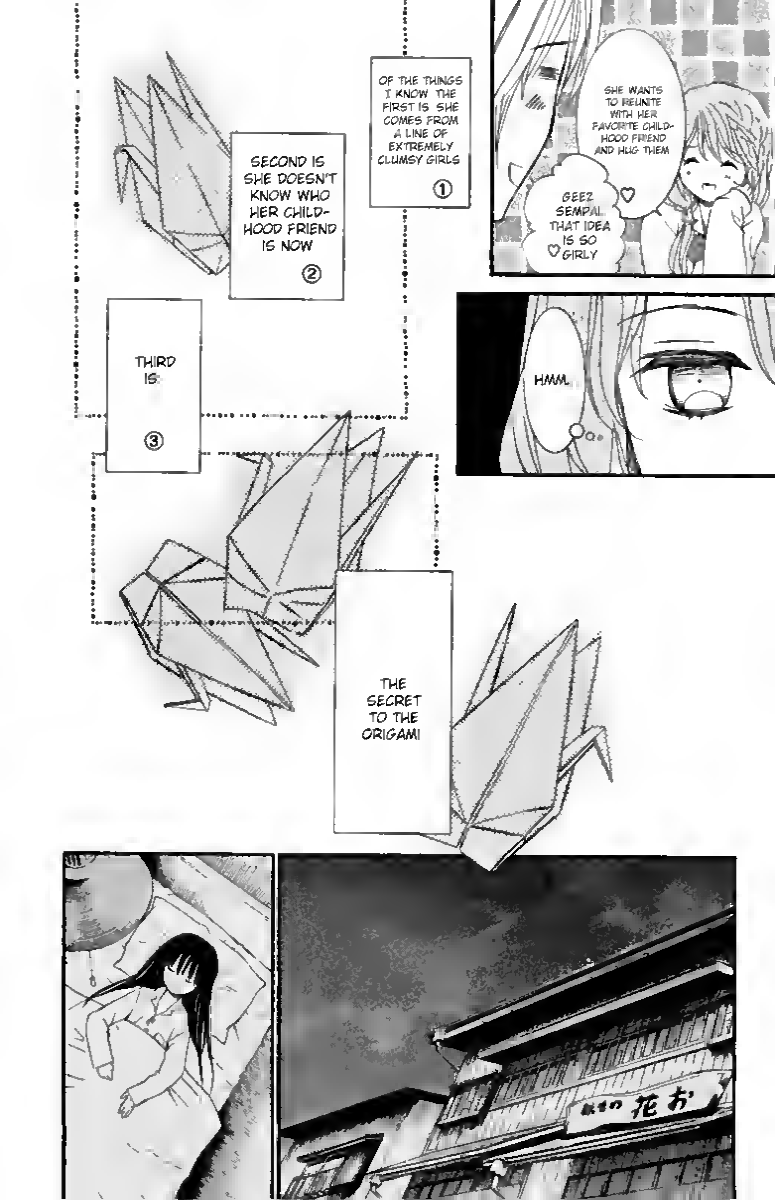
I WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HANAONO-SAN. YOU SEE, THERE'S A BOY... I WANT TO HELP.
YOUR KINDNESS IS GOD LEVEL!
WHY ARE WE FOLLOWING HER?
HER HOUSE IS IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION... WHERE IS SHE GOING?
...? SEMPAI...
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING~ I'M HERE TO HELP!
THANKS ♡
ALRIGHT! I'LL HELP TOO!
HMM.
WHAT'S SHE DOING?
HELPING
SHE ACTS LIKE A TOWN HANDY-MAN
RIGHT, RIGHT.
HIS NAME IS KOTETSU NISHIKI-CHAN
OKAY, I'LL TAKE POCHIMARU TO THE PARK!

UM. EXCUSE ME..
HELPING...? WHY DOES SHE DO THAT?
...WELL... YOU GOT ME THERE
WHY DOES SHE DO IT? WHAT'S HER MOTIVATION?
OH. NISHIKI-CHAN, HUH? SHE'S A GOOD GIRL.
HUH? DID YOU SAY FREE OF CHARGE?
IT'S NICE OF HER TO HELP PEOPLE AROUND TOWN FREE OF CHARGE...
SHE SAYS SHE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT PAYMENT, AS LONG AS YOU WRITE A FEW LINES FOR HER.
ORIGAMI...!
You agreed to walk Kotetsu
Furuyasuna
THIS... IS THE RECEIPT I WROTE.
SEE?
I'M WAITING FOR HER TO COME BACK AND FOLD IT INTO A CRANE
.....
HUH..
THANK YOU VERY MUCH ♡
ANOTHER PAPER CRANE..?

SHE WENT TO THE POLICE BOX AGAIN?
SHE'S UNBELIEV-ABLY PAN-ICKY HUH?
.....
OH SHE'S AT A POLICE BOX
UH-HUH THAT'S GOOD
AGAIN?
SHE'S LOOKING AROUND
SHE GOT LOST HUH?
SUKUIYA-SAN EH? SHE TAKES GOOD CARE OF ME
AND YET SHE'S GOOD AT HELPING PEOPLE AND WHAT NOT
I CAN'T LOOK AWAY IT'S LIKE ITS HER FIRST TIME DOING THIS
YEAH BUT MAYBE YOU'LL BE LOOKING FOR A WHILE..
HUH?
HUH?
ALRIGHT! I'M GONNA START GETTING INFO AGAIN SO YOU'LL BE FOLLOWING HER!
PLEASE REPORT BACK LATER!

NISHIKI-CHAN? OH, THE ONE FROM HANAO.
I BET SHE MUST BE LONELY SEPARATED FROM HER PARENTS
SHE FOUND OUR RYOU-TAROU AGAIN RECENTLY.
SHE LIKES GOLDFISH.
THAT'S ALL I KNOW
SO, SHE'S STAYING WITH HER GRANDMA?
YEAH. I HEARD IT WAS HER FAMILY'S IDEA.
RIGHT NOW IT'S JUST HER AND HER GRANDMA.
WHY JUST HER...?
IS THERE ANY REASON BEHIND IT?
WHO KNOWS THAT'S ALL I CAN TELL YOU
.....

KINO-KUN, CAN I HAVE THAT ONE?
THANKS
OKAY, PLEASE LISTEN TO MY IMPRESSIVE FINALE!
AFTER SHE GOT LOST AGAIN, SHE WAS GOING TO GO BACK TO THE POLICE BOX. BUT THEN A PREGNANT LADY WENT INTO LABOR RIGHT IN FRONT OF HER.
YEAH, OKAY, BUT
IT LOOKS LIKE HANAONO-SAN CAME TO THIS TOWN JUST SO SHE COULD LIVE WITH HER GRANDMA
AWESOME! BUT WHY DOES THAT MATTER?
WELL SHE WAS SPECIALLY TRANSFERRED TO THE SECOND YEAR CLASS ISN'T THAT WEIRD?
DID YOU HEAR ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?
OH, WELL,
SHE WAS BORN IN MISATO TOWN
I HEARD SHE LIVED HERE UNTIL SHE STARTED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OR SOMETHING
IT SOUNDS LIKE HER PARENTS MOVED TO A NEW HOUSE OR SOMETHING
AND YET, THEY WANTED HER TO ATTEND HIGH SCHOOL IN HER HOMETOWN?
DIDN'T SHE COME BACK BECAUSE SHE LIKES THIS TOWN OR SOMETHING?
HMM, WELL...

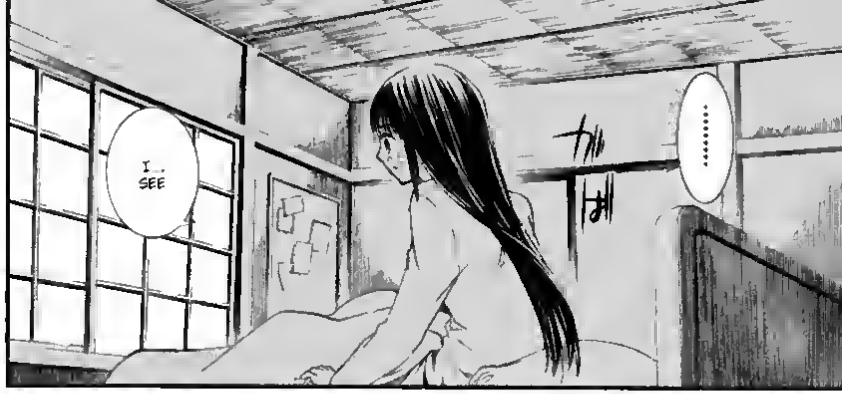

OF THE THINGS I KNOW THE FIRST IS SHE COMES FROM A LINE OF EXTREMELY CLUMSY GIRLS ①
SECOND IS SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHO HER CHILDHOOD FRIEND IS NOW ②
THIRD IS ③
THE SECRET TO THE ORIGAMI
SHE WANTS TO REUNITE WITH HER FAVORITE CHILDHOOD FRIEND AND HUG THEM
GEEZ SEMPAI THAT IDEA IS SO GIRLY
HMM.

HEY, WAIT!
WHO ARE YOU?
DON'T TELL ANYONE.
I'M A FOX.
WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT, AGAIN . ?
AFTER I MET THE FOX BOY, WE WENT DEEPER INTO THE TORII.
IS THIS A DREAM?
IT FOLLOWS THAT SCENE FROM BEFORE.

WANNA PLAY HIDE-AND-SEEK?
OKAY
THEN COUNT TO TEN
READY OR NOT,
?
AH! FOUND YOU!
NOW YOU'RE IT
HERE I COME
OKAY
THIS IS FUN
YEAH, IT IS
I'LL BE GOING FAR AWAY, SO I WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE YOU ANYMORE
I CAN'T I'M MOVING SOON
WANNA PLAY AGAIN?
SURE IT'S A DEAL
AH I CAN'T!
?

THEY WON'T.
I DIDN'T EVEN GET TO SAY GOODBYE TO MY FRIENDS YET.
I'M SCARED TO... I FEEL LIKE THEY'LL FORGET ME...
NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO.
THIS TOWN WON'T FORGET YOU.
AH!?
FOX-SA.

TH-THE GOLD-FISH!
WHAT DO I DO, WHAT DO I...
DON'T WORRY
I GOT THEM


I...
SEE
.....

...THEY'RE CONNECTED!!!

WHAT'RE YOU USING THESE FOR?
PLANKS OF PLY-WOOD!!!
HOORAY! WE GOT SCRAP WOOD!
YOU CAN TAKE WHATEVER YOU'D LIKE
THANK YOU VERY MUUCH!
木材田

Sign: Invincible!!
I BET SOMETHING LIKE THIS TAKES A LOT OF HARD WORK!
YEAH... ORIGINALLY, WE WOULD ALWAYS REUSE THE BASE, BUT THIS YEAR, IT HAPPENED TO BE IN DISREPAIR...
OH, WILL IT HAVE AN EPIC BATTLE ON IT!?
THE 2ND YEAR COMMITTEE IS IN CHARGE OF SCENERY... AND MAKING AN INSPIRATIONAL SIGN!
HEY, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! I WANT TO HELP YOU LATER, TOO!
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR HELPING PAN-CHAN
AH, I SEE
OF COURSE, THE ART CLUB WILL HELP OUT WITH THE ILLUSTRATION,
SO OUR TASK RIGHT NOW IS TO MAKE THE BASE AND GATHER ART SUPPLIES
HEHE . THERE RE OTHER NICE CAFES IN MISATO TOWN Y'KNOW
WE PASSED BY IT A WHILE AGO... BESIDES THEY'RE CLOSED
OH WHAT ABOUT EBISUYA?
HEY GUYS THIS IS THE PERFECT TIME TO TAKE A TEA BREAK, RIGHT?

EXCUSE ME, CAN WE COME IN?
WHO...! IT'S...

I KNEW IT! IT'S KON-SAN!
OH, IT'S SUKUIYA-SAN AND THE OTHERS.
DID YOU ALL COME HERE TO PET THEM, TOO?

WHAT? N-N-N-NOT REALLY
? WHAT'S WRONG NIKKI-CHAN? YOU LOOK SURPRISED

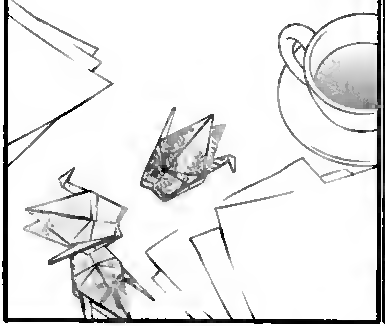
A CAT CAFE...?
PET... YOU SAY? IS THIS...
IT IS!

I SEE
THERE'S ONE HERE ON KOI HILL

HM...? I FEEL LIKE I'VE SEEN THESE GUYS SOMEWHERE.
THEY GREET YOU RIGHT AWAY
THIS IS MY FIRST TIME AT A CAT CAFE
TO THINK THERE WAS A PLACE LIKE THIS ON KOI HILL... WHOA!
GOTCHA COME TO THINK OF IT, YOU SAID THEY WORK AT A CAT CAFE
THEY'RE OSHICHI-SAN'S SIBLINGS
WELCOME.
THIS CAFE IS RUN BY THE YOUNGER DAUGHTER FROM EBISUYA AND HER HUSBAND.
HUH? IS THAT YOU, SUMI-CHAN?
HURRY UP AND SHUT THE DOOR SO THE CATS WON'T RUN AWAY.
SHE'S A CAT CHARMER
THEY REALLY LIKE HER
C'MON, SHOO, SHOO!
WHEN EBISUYA IS CLOSED, SOMETIMES I'M ROPED INTO WORKING HERE. IT'S REALLY ANNOYING.
SHE'S A CAT CHARMER.

YOU KNOW THAT GUY...?
KON-SAN? YEAH I DO
HUH. THAT'S NICE WOULD HE EVER GO SHOPPING WITH US?
YEAH HE'S A BOOK-WORM
.....
SOUMA
HAHAHA, SOUMA, YOU LOOK SO FUNNY!
NIKKI-CHAN, NIKKI-CHAN!

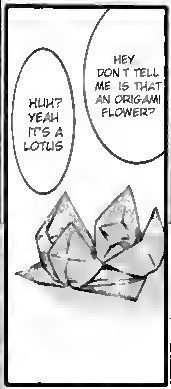
HUH...
KON-SAN... I SEE
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING. HERE'S YOUR MEOWPU-CHINO.
THANK... AH!!
SU-SUMI-CHAN, THIS ISN'T WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO LOOK LIKE! IT LOOKS LIKE BLOOD!
I can't drink this!
How it's supposed to look
.....
IT TASTES THE SAME



NEVER MIND.
KANO? WHY'RE YOU...
KANO-SAN ISN'T HERE TODAY, HUH?

AMAZING! HOW DID YOU MAKE THIS? YOU CAN MAKE ORIGAMI OTHER THAN CRANES?
AHAHA. I MADE IT THE SAME WAY YOU MAKE A CRANE IT'S EASY
YEAH RIGHT! DID A RELATIVE DO THIS?

JUST GET THE COLORS WE NEED.
WHEN SHOULD WE HAVE THE ACRYLIC PAINT READY BY?
OKAY. I'LL TRY ASKING TOMORROW.


HEY DON'T TELL ME IS THAT AN ORIGAMI FLOWER?
HUH? YEAH IT'S A LOTUS

LET'S SEE... WHICH ONE DID I WRITE IT ON?

HEY, THE COLORS WE NEED...
WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?
OH, I WANT TO LEARN, TOO.
HUH?
IF YOU WANT, I CAN TEACH YOU HOW!
I LOOK OKAY, RIGHT?
THIS IS FUN, EH?
HAHAHA. YOU WANNA BE LIKE THAT, EH?
YOU BARELY KNEW WE HAD A PLACE LIKE THIS, EVEN THOUGH THERE'RE CATS DOWNTOWN...
THIS IS GREAT. IT'D BE BETTER WITH MORE CATS
IS THAT SO?

HEY, SOLIMA,
WILL YOU... LISTEN TO THE REST OF MY STORY FROM THE OTHER DAY?
I HAD A DREAM... AND REMEMBERED THE FOX BOY I MET AT THE TEMPLE FESTIVAL
WE SCOOPED GOLDFISH AND PLAYED A LOT...IT WAS REALLY FUN
BUT I DROPPED THE GOLD-FISH ON THE GROUND
AND THEN, THE FOX BOY RESCUED THEM
I WAS SO HAPPY
THE FRAGMENT OF GOLDFISH IN SOMEONE'S HANDS

FIR
FIRST... LO
YEAH, MY FIRST LOVE!
IT REALLY WAS ABOUT HIM
I THINK HE WAS MY FIRST LOVE
I WONDER IF HE WAS ACTUALLY A FOX
WHETHER HE WAS OR NOT,
SEE? I'M ALL FIRED UP!
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND
...OH
I'LL TELL HIM HOW I FEEL!
I'LL SEE THE FOX BOY AGAIN
I'LL FIND OUT WHO HE IS... AND THEN,

WHY?
HUH?
W... H... I LIKED HIM.
PFFT!
ER... SORRY, I WASN'T LISTENING.
PLEASE, CONTINUE
A... ANYWAY, I'M GONNA GIVE IT MY ALL.
YOU CAN'T SAY THAT FOR SURE, NISHIKI.
BY THE WAY
THE MOST LIKELY CONTENDER AT THE MOMENT
IS KON-SAN, OF COURSE.

MY GRANDMA TOLD ME THAT SHE HASN'T FORGOTTEN HER FIRST LOVE
I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT KON-SAN AND THE FOX BOY.
SO, UM KON-SAN SHOULD BE THE FOX BOY
AND
MY FIRST LOVE
THAT HE MIGHT BE THE FOX BOY
Y'KNOW, I TOLD KON-SAN
NISHI...
...

ER, AT THE MOMENT, I CAN ONLY ASSUME IT'S HIM,
I'M RIGHT?
NOW THAT I'VE TOLD YOU, DO YOU THINK THERE'S A CHANCE
BUT IF I REMEMBER WHO IT IS, I'LL TELL YOU
HE SAID WE MIGHT BE MISSING THE SAME FRAGMENT
THAT'S WHY WE'RE GONNA LOOK FOR IT TOGETHER.
BIG BRO, BIG BRO!

LET ME TAKE A LOOK.
NIKKI-CHAN, SOUMA-KUN, HURRY!
LOOK! THE CAT'S SLEEPING IN A WEIRD POSITION!
WOW, REALLY!!? I'M COMING!
REALLY?

HAA
WHERE S... THE COMMITTEE BEING HELD?
HAA.
OH NO, I'M LATE!

ガラッ
NISHIKI, IT'S THIS WAY
IT'S HERE!

HANAONO-SAN, THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK.
SIGH... I GOT LOST...

HERE. YOU DROPPED THIS EARLIER
AH! MY PENCIL CASE!

OH, KANO-SAN

H...HUH? OH, I MUST'VE DROPPED IT WHEN I TRIPPED IN THE HALL...
THANK YOU SO MUCH. YOU'RE SO NICE!
NO PROBLEM ♥ TAKE CARE ♥
THE SECOND YEARS IN CHARGE OF SCENERY! STEP FORWARD AND PLEASE TELL US YOUR PROGRESS.
OKAY. LET'S BEGIN.
OH, OKAY!
YOU OKAY? SHOULD I GO WITH YOU?
I'M FINE! I HAVE MY NOTES WITH ME.
LET'S SEE. WHICH ONE WAS IT AGAIN?
AH, HERE IT IS.
SORRY, I'LL START NOW
ABOUT THE REPAIRING OF THIS YEAR'S SIGN...

?
WHAT'S WRONG?
HURRY UP AND CONTINUE!

Kingyozaka Noboru

Chapter 8

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